

Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church Crossnotes

February 
2008



I was installed at Holy Cross Lutheran Church on February 9, 2003. So, this month I am observing my five-year anniversary as this congregation's pastor.

During those years we have experienced many changes as a congregation. The most obvious of course is the new sanctuary rising on what was the west lawn of the church. When our family came here to visit and look at houses while I was considering the call, I remember taking the picture on this page, with our children standing in front of the original tower which until last year was above the former west entrance. I frankly could never have dreamed at that point that the same cross which was atop that tower would five years later be gracing the belltower of a beautiful new sanctuary!

Another recent milestone for our congregation came this year on

January 27. When I first arrived here, I recall daydreaming about the future, and it occurred to me that it would be a big breakthrough the first time we reached 100 in attendance on a "normal" Sunday, without a Baptism or the Preschool children singing, etc. That was an audacious thought back then—given that our attendance could at times be a tenth of that goal—but on January 27 we had 99!

For longtime members of Holy Cross, the transformation they have witnessed over the years since the congregation's founding in 1995 is even more amazing. Newer members of Holy Cross may not realize that the congregation's first "home," pictured on page 2, is actually at 119 Wallace in North Sioux City. It is literally a "home," a ranch style house that the congregation rented when it was first organized.

junction of Sioux Point Road and North Shay Road, next to a similar house that is still located there, across Sioux Point Road and "through the woods" from where Mother Teresa Church is now located. This house which served as our congregation's first "home" was later moved to its current location in North Sioux City.

The first worship service in the building which has served as our sanctuary for the past decade and will soon become our fellowship hall was on Christmas Eve, December 24, 1997. This was also a major leap forward for the congregation—and a major leap of faith for the members back then. At the time, the loan taken out by the congregation was the highest ever on a per-member basis in the history of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund! Without the bold vision of these founding members of Holy Cross we would not now be preparing to move into our new, expanded facility.



The Vogts children pose beneath the tower which was over the former west entrance of Holy Cross during a visit to the congregation in December, 2002 while Pastor Vogts was considering the congregation's call. The same cross which was atop this tower now graces the belltower of our new sanctuary.

Both worship services and preschool were conducted in this house for several years before the first phase of our building was constructed. At the time this house was located south of the

Holy Cross has received great blessings over the years, but has also faced some big challenges. The congregation lost many members when the Gateway corporate headquarters moved to California, and the Internet bubble subsequently burst and led to the precipitous decline of that company's fortunes. The sale of IBP to Tyson Foods also meant some members moving to Arkansas. All this contributed to a slowing for several years of Dakota Dunes' growth, which in turn had a negative effect on Holy Cross.



This ranch style house now located at 119 Wallace in North Sioux City was literally the original “home” of Holy Cross, where both worship services and preschool were conducted from 1995-1997. At the time it was located south of the junction of Sioux Point Road and North Shay Road in Dakota Dunes and was later moved to North Sioux City.

About that time the congregation’s founding pastor, Rev. Glen Wurdeman, accepted a call to be assistant pastor of Advent Lutheran Church, Zionsville, Indiana, where he is still serving. This led to a pastoral vacancy at Holy Cross of nearly three years. What is probably a record of 24 pastoral calls were turned down during those years before I became candidate number 25.

I had been on the staff of Concordia University in Mequon, Wisconsin as Director of Communications and Church Relations. Although I enjoyed that position and the university setting, I missed serving in the pastoral ministry in a congregation. I felt a real tug to Holy Cross, which prompted me to accept the call.

It has been a joy serving as pastor here because the members have always

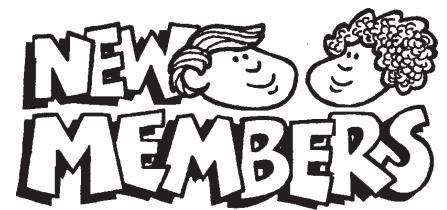
been so supportive. Even when the challenges were very great, we have worked together in true Christian harmony.

Paul says in Romans 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes,” and in 1 Corinthians 1:18, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

In both verses the word “power” is the Greek *dynamis*, from which we get the word “dynamite.” Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, used that word to describe this explosive material because *dynamis* means something which has inherent power in itself. That’s exactly what we’ve seen at work at Holy Cross since its founding in 1995, God’s “dynamite,” the Gospel, the message of the cross, which is “the power of God for salvation.” It is God alone, through the power of his Gospel in the Word and Sacraments, that has accomplished all that has happened here at Holy Cross.

We will have many more challenges as we move into our new sanctuary and, Lord willing, our growth continues. But, as Samuel says in 1 Samuel 7:12, “Thus far the LORD has helped us,” and He will continue to be with us and bless us both individually and as a congregation in the future as He has in the years past.

Pastor Kevin Vogts



Darla Bauer

Justin Benson

Bob & Gloria Barnum

Dr. Christie Mensch

*Brian & Melissa Rehnelt
Rylee*

*Andy & Pat Winborn
Megan, Scott, Lauren*

Several of these members have been at Holy Cross for some time, but their written transfers of membership were just received last month.

There are several others currently in Adult Information Class. A New Member Sunday will be scheduled to welcome these new members after that class has completed.

*Welcome to the Holy Cross
Family of Faith!*

Crossnotes

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February, 2008

Volume 6

Number 2



**BUDGET
UPDATE**

As of January 27, 2008

Total Offerings Budgeted	
Year-to-Date	\$8,980
Total Offerings Received	
Year-to-Date	\$9,422
Total Budget Surplus	
Year-to-Date	\$442

*Building
for the
Future*

**New Building
Dedication March 30
Dedication Committee
Volunteers Needed**

Although there have been some delays in our building project, it should be substantially completed next month and it has been decided that the dedication service for our new sanctuary will still be on the afternoon of March 30 as previously planned.

Volunteers are needed for a Church Dedication Committee to help plan this day's events. Please sign up on the bulletin board. For more information contact Pastor Vogts.

We are planning our first service in the new church for Maundy Thursday, March 20. However, if the new building is ready to occupy significantly sooner than expected, it is possible we might move over earlier.



Easter falls unusually early this year, and Lent begins with our Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, February 6 at 7:00pm. Lent services will continue at 7:00pm each Wednesday evening during Lent.

Our Maundy Thursday service on March 20 and Good Friday service on March 21 will also be at 7:00pm.

Bring your family to meditate on our Savior's sacrifice for our salvation.



2008 Lent Sermon Series

Wednesday Evenings, 7:00pm
Beginning Ash Wednesday, February 6th

February 6 – Ash Wednesday
“The Triumphal Entry”

March 5 – Lent Service V
“The Humiliations”

February 13 – Lent Service II
“The Temple Courts”

March 12 – Lent Service VI
“The Way of Sorrows”

February 20 – Lent Service III
“The Garden of Gethsemane”

March 20 – Maundy Thursday
“The Upper Room”

February 27 – Lent Service IV
“The Trials”

March 21 – Good Friday
“The Place of the Skull”

LENTEN
BIBLE
STUDY



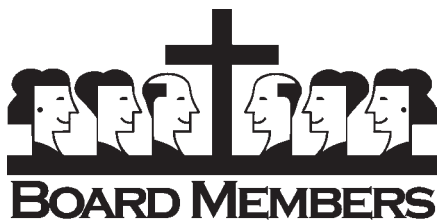
On February 3 we are beginning a new study for the Lenten season in Adult Bible Class.

As we consider *The Week That Changed the World* we will look at and discuss the accounts of Holy Week from

the Gospels, using a booklet with the four Gospel accounts in parallel columns. Join in Sunday mornings at 10:30am.

Lenten Devotion Booklets

It is an old custom to have extra, special devotions during Lent, both for the congregation as a whole and for individual members and families. Included with this month's newsletter is a devotional booklet for Lent from Concordia Publishing House, *Lamb of God, Pure and Holy*.



Board Orientation Meeting February 10

The Voters Assembly on January 27 directed that all church boards meet to receive orientation about their functions. The church treasurer will also review the budget and financial procedures.

Since much of the material overlaps there will be a joint Board Orientation Meeting for all members of all church boards on Sunday, February 10 at 3:00pm.



February 3
Myron Bose

February 6 (Ash Wednesday)
Jacob Vogts

February 10
Kylie Martin

February 13 (Lent Service)
Zachary Selby

February 17
Evan Steemken

February 20 (Lent Service)
Trevor Vilhauer

February 24
Sarah Vogts

February 27 (Lent Service)
Keegan Johnson



February 3
Keegan Johnson

February 6 (Ash Wednesday)
Justin Peterson

February 10
Dylan Sawyer

February 13 (Lent Service)
Trevor Vilhauer

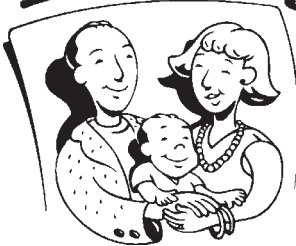
February 17
A.J. Michels

February 20 (Lent Service)
Dylan Sawyer

February 24
Tyler Fletcher

February 27 (Lent Service)
Kylie Martin

Church Photo Directory



We are planning to print our own pictorial directory for Holy Cross, which modern technology makes possible. Our thanks to Andy Winborn for taking pictures after church over several Sundays.

If you prefer, you may submit a photo to Andy or Pastor Vogts, which we will copy and return to you. You may also email a photo to Pastor Vogts at pastorvogts@longlines.com.



Our congregation has designated a title of 10% of our general offerings to support the work of our District and Synod. Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services specific missionaries around the world who are supported in this way by our congregation.

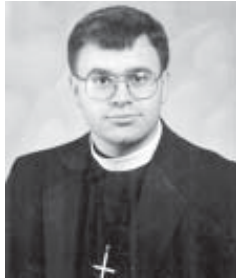


February 3
Rev. Bob and Diana Hedtke
Thailand

Exciting things are happening in the Uttaradit area of central and northern Thailand. Some years ago, mudslides brought this area to its knees as many lost their lives due to this natural disaster. Concordia Welfare Education Foundation of Thailand entered the lost and forlorn town and provided help in the form of relief items and also educational scholarships. They came back with a team from LCMS World Mission. Together, they visited four schools and made contact with more than 526 kids and teachers. All of these people were unreached and uncommitted. They did their best to reach the unreached with the Gospel of Jesus and the Good News of forgiveness and salvation through Him alone.

In the Pang Na area of southern Thailand, the LCMS World Mission team worked in six schools and a Lutheran church. They interacted with 339 students and their teachers through teaching English-as-a-Second-Language

(ESL) as well as at one church camp where only a small portion of the children were committed Christians. The rest were of other religions. They definitely heard the Good News. Between the CWEFT team and the LCMS World Mission team, EFL workshops were held, games were enjoyed, much singing was offered, and many kids were smiling.



February 10
Rev. Ted Krey
Venezuela

Our largest congregation in the east celebrated their building dedication on Reformation Day. More than 400 people attended a three-and-a-half-hour service! It was very moving to hear 400 people sing hymns like “A Mighty Fortress” and “The Church’s One Foundation.” Afterwards, all enjoyed a grand feast, which included an entire cow to feed the masses of hungry guests. The meat was roasted Venezuelan-style, over an open pit, skewered on long poles.

About four years ago, we also began building a church in Valencia. The men and youth from Maracay spent many Saturdays building the parsonage and laying the foundation for the sanctuary. At that time, we had no equipment and literally lowered one of our boys by his ankles into the water reservoir, with two buckets in his hands to draw water out for us. The experience didn’t harm him—in fact, he will soon be joining our pastoral program!

Funds had run out for the building project, and for the last four years, the congregation has held services under the parsonage porch or under a mango tree. Now, finally, I was privileged to preach at the dedication of the new sanctuary in Valencia. Some 200 people were in attendance for the celebration and representatives from 15 of our 22 congregations were present. One

congregation rented a bus for the four-hour bus ride and they told me that they had Sunday school classes on the bus so that no one missed their Sunday school classes that day!



February 17
Anna Moore
Macau

I asked Elizabeth, one of my English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students, what she thought happened to a person after death. She in turn asked me what I believed, and I explained briefly about heaven and hell. Then she told me that she didn’t know much about Jesus, but that she’d like to learn more. I told her that I would be very happy to talk about it with her and invited her and her husband over for dinner the following day. We had a very nice dinner, and Elizabeth and her husband invited Carol, another missionary, and me to join them for *dim sum* in a couple of weeks.

One day I dropped by the store Elizabeth manages, with my stack of teaching tools. She was delighted to see us. We started talking. “Is that a Bible?” she suddenly asked. I pulled the children’s Bible from the stack to show her. “I think this would be very good for me,” she said, “so that I can understand it. I think if I would read the Bible I would not understand, but this is simple. I would like to read it.” The following day, I gave Elizabeth a copy of the children’s Bible.

Was this a series of coincidences? I hardly think so. I’ve been teaching Elizabeth for nine months, and there has never been an opportunity to discuss spiritual matters until now. But, the Spirit has been quietly working in her heart all this time.



February 24
Rev. Matthew Heise
Russia

One of my seminary students, Eduard Yuronen, and several of his friends set off on a missionary journey this summer that paralleled accounts from Acts. They teamed up with several youth in Slava Abdulinin’s congregation and went deep into the heart of Bashkortostan, a republic in Russia. Practical evangelism experience is expected of students during the summer months when classes are not in session. But, it was obvious that this journey was far more than a requirement—it was a labor of love.

They first visited a village about 15 km from Slava’s hometown of Birsk with a predominately Muslim culture. The group asked permission to spend time and work with the village kids, making clear that they were Christians from the Lutheran Church. Even though they were not allowed to conduct evangelical activities in the local school, most parents were happy that their kids were occupied with something worthwhile during the summer. The seminarians were not allowed to use the local school, where pictures of another faith’s holy men decorated the walls, but they did spend three days with the kids, doing fun activities and presenting Bible stories, including teaching them hymns. In the late afternoon, the kids had to go home and help care for farm animals. The kids would then return at 9:00pm—the sun stays up a long time during the Russian summer—and bring some of their families’ home-baked bread.

The group of missionaries went through more non-Christian villages, interspersed throughout the Bashkortostan countryside. They had invitations, which Slava had secured, to do evangelism in a few villages, so they

restricted their work to those places. In the village of Chisma, they came upon sacred tree groves. In this part of Russia, many still follow the pagan practices of their ancestors, including tree worship. Much of this was discouraged during the Soviet era, but now paganism is returning to these regions.

As they journeyed further into Bashkortostan's interior, they came upon another village called Kuzovo, where the kids knew nothing about the Christian faith. Once again, it was not easy to receive permission to work with the kids, but our group was able to secure the use of the village cultural center. The children watched a Christian video, and the whole group developed friendships here with people immersed in the native ways of their ancestors.

In the last village, a group of men almost provoked a fight with the seminarians. They didn't want them evangelizing there and had been known to run other groups out of town. I admire these students' courage. Eduard has already asked me if we can help support their work in the villages again next summer. How can I refuse? They understand that the mission of the church is not to hide the Gospel, but to share it. We pray that the seeds planted this summer will grow and that regular visits can be made to these villages in the future.



In the back of the church is a sign up sheet to bring snacks for after worship. You are welcome to bring whatever snacks you wish.

Those bringing snacks are also asked to please prepare the coffee. Instructions are posted near the coffee maker. Coffee, cups, napkins, plates, etc. are all provided and in the kitchen. Thank you to those providing snacks!

February 3
Mensch

February 10
Martin

February 17
Need Volunteer

February 24
Finkral



Elders for February
Doug Jansen & Ron Yockey

Next Elders Meeting
February 7, 7:00pm



February 10
"Very God of Very God:
His Divine Glory"
Matthew 17:1-9

February 10
"Satan's Triple Play"
Matthew 4:1-11

February 10
"Encounters with Jesus:
Nicodemus"
John 3:1-17

February 24
"Encounters with Jesus:
The Woman at the Well"
John 4:5-42



Robert & Karen Brock
February 13, 1999

Jon & Gail Dorr
February 25, 1978

Mary Mettenbrink, February 14
Caden Dial, February 17
Mike Bargstadt, February 20
Mary Rosene, February 23
Jon Dorr, February 25
Carol Smith, February 25
Vaughn Finkral, February 26

We list members' birthdays and anniversaries in the newsletter each month and the bulletin each week. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the church office at 232-9117 or email holycross@longlines.com.



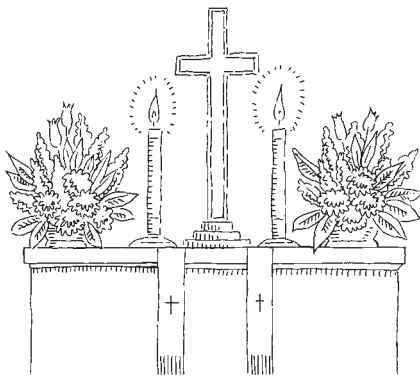
One of the joys of being located in a growing, mobile community is the large number of new members we frequently receive. However, members also sometimes move on to other locations.

When members of Holy Cross permanently move away a significant distance, unless they request otherwise

we generally list them as "Moved" in our church records. Their information no longer appears in the Membership Directory, but they do still receive the church newsletter, as well as reminders and encouragement to transfer their membership to a Missouri Synod congregation in their area.

The following have recently moved, all due to job related relocations: Joel, Mandy & Carter Baier, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Paul Harkness Lennox, South Dakota; Everett & Barb Johnson, Westin, Mankato, Minnesota; Kristina Krause, Omaha, Nebraska; Dan & Mary Lee, Rebecca, Isaac, Brookings, South Dakota; Todd & Cathy Nilson, Cassidy, Spencer, Trevor, Minnesota; Joe & Elaine Vanacker Toronto, Canada.

"The LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)



2008 Flower Calendar

The flower calendar for 2008 is on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Occasions to remember include anniversaries, birthdays, in memory of loved ones, etc. Flowers may be obtained anywhere and you may provide your own vase or use one of the assortment in the church kitchen.

February 24

Jon & Gail Dorr

March 30

Doug & Janet Martin
Church Dedication

ATTENDANCE

Record of Fellowship Attendance Pads

The Board of Elders has decided to begin using attendance pads to record attendance of both members as well as guests.

Everyone is asked to please complete sometime during each service the "Record of Fellowship" located in a folder at both ends of each pew. (We are using two attendance pads for each pew because in the new sanctuary some of the pews will be quite long.)

We will still have a traditional Guest Register, but hopefully adding this new system will help us have better records of names, addresses, and those in attendance. Also, the Board of Elders wants to do a better job of tracking the attendance of members.

Encouraging Trends in LCMS Seminary Enrollment

There are two main purposes for which our congregation has joined together with approximately 6,100 others across the country to form The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: missions and the higher education of church workers, especially our future pastors. A member of a Lutheran congregation in our area which recently left another Lutheran denomination to become independent was recently lamenting to me that a major hurdle they now face is having no source of qualified Pastors. Our Synod is very blessed with two of the most highly regarded and largest seminaries in the United States. And considering the distressing theological decay in many denominations, and especially at many seminaries, the greatest blessing is that both of our seminaries are firmly rooted in Scripture as the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

For admittance to the Pastoral Ministry of the LCMS, these institutions have four-year graduate programs leading to a Master of Divinity degree. Students take a wide variety of courses in the areas of Biblical, systematic, historical, and practical theology. Many students have become proficient in the Biblical languages, Greek and Hebrew, in their undergraduate pre-seminary studies, or prerequisite classes in these languages are also offered at the seminary. Both seminaries also offer additional graduate programs in theology, including Ph.D., Doctor of Ministry, Master of Sacred Theology, and Master of Arts in Religion. All of the Master of Divinity students at our seminaries are male, but both offer Deaconess programs for females entering this professional ministry of our Synod.

Our guest preacher on December 30 was Rev. Jason Braaten, son-in-law of Jon and Gail Dorr, who is on the staff of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Following the service he gave a presentation about the Pastoral Ministry and the exciting things happening at our Ft. Wayne seminary.

Our Synod's other seminary is Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. They recently released some encouraging figures about their incoming class this year. For the 2007-2008 academic year, 99 first-year students enrolled there to prepare for the Pastoral Ministry. One of the most fascinating and surprising aspects about this year's new students is age. On average, it is the youngest group of new seminarians in years. Their average age is 25, compared to 27 in 2006-2007, and 29 in 2005-2006.

This drop in age and increase in the number of students entering the Pastoral Ministry as their first career is a very encouraging development, which bucks the trend being faced by most denominations. From a demographic standpoint, men entering the seminary in their 20's will be in active service longer. And this healthy trend certainly demonstrates an enthusiasm and zeal among the young men of our church.



This Wednesday, February 6
7:00pm

Services Each Wednesday During Lent at 7:00pm

Meditations on the Events of Holy Week: *"Live from Jerusalem"*
(See Page 3)

**Jesus, I Will Ponder Now
on Your Holy Passion**



Return Service Requested

Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor
149 Bison Trail
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

Crossnotes
Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church